



## **(U) The Jemaah Islamiyah: A Continuing Threat**

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(U) Since the existence of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) was revealed in Singapore in December 2001, well over 200 members of this terrorist organization have been arrested, detained or killed. However, the capabilities of the JI became apparent in October 2002 when they set off several bombs in Bali, Indonesia killing 202 people, including 88 Australians. In August 2003 the JI struck again, killing 13 people at a hotel in Jakarta. While arrests continue, the JI is still a threat to the stability of Southeast Asia, and there are several reasons for this belief:

- (U) All senior leaders of the JI central command and control trained in Afghanistan. This group totaled 272 people, and they call themselves G272. While many of these "colonels" have been stopped, there are still many out there free and possibly planning or organizing future attacks.
- (S//SI) Following the arrest of key members, replacements were easily found. When the chief operations officer Hambali was picked up, several sources indicated that his position was quickly filled. According to SIGINT, the former head of one of the operations areas (called Mantiqis) was also quickly replaced.
- (U) The JI is also rebuilding itself. Many of the pesentrans (madrassas, or religious schools) in Southeast Asia are currently educating the next wave of JI members. Many of the JI leaders went to the so-called "ivy league" schools, and their children are going there now. Another cell was identified in fall 2003 in Pakistan: the al-Ghuraba cell consisted of about 20 Southeast Asians who were being groomed for the next generation of JI leaders. The members were deported to their home countries and several were arrested or detained.
- (S//SI) The JI also has relations with terrorist groups in the southern Philippines. The JI has been training in Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) camps since the mid-90s, and SIGINT has revealed that the JI and the Abu Sayyaff Group (ASG) have been working together.

(C) There are several targets of opportunity for the JI. There are quite a number of soft targets such as tourist spots, hotels, etc. to attack. In addition, there are several national elections this year in Southeast Asia. The Philippines is holding a presidential election on 10 May -- in late March, several ASG members who were reportedly planning "Madrid-style" bombings were picked up in Manila. Presidential elections will also be held this summer in Indonesia.

(U) Another terrorist target might well be very large crude oil carriers (VLCC) transiting the Malacca Straits between Malaysia and Indonesia. Over one-third of the piracy acts reported in 2003 took place in the Straits. It is not inconceivable that the JI could link up with the pirates to take control of a VLCC or a liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier and crash the vessel into an oil facility. Alternatively, the JI could run the VLCC aground and blow a hole in the ship, creating an environmental disaster greater than the Exxon Valdez. Finally, the JI could also sink a VLCC in the narrowest part of the Straits, blocking traffic until the ship was removed.

(S//SI) The Australian Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) is currently aggressively pursuing this terrorist group. Any collection information that NSA obtains on the JI is forwarded to the DSD. The CIA has even been passing JI-related information to the Australians in an information-sharing initiative.

(U) The JI still remains a threat even though great strides have been made to stop them. Other

groups that we are not aware of could also be out there. We need -- now more than ever -- to be on the alert for possible attacks that could come from almost any direction causing more damage than we can possibly imagine.

(U//FOUO) If you have questions on this topic, contact [REDACTED] of the Australian Liaison Office at [REDACTED] s).

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